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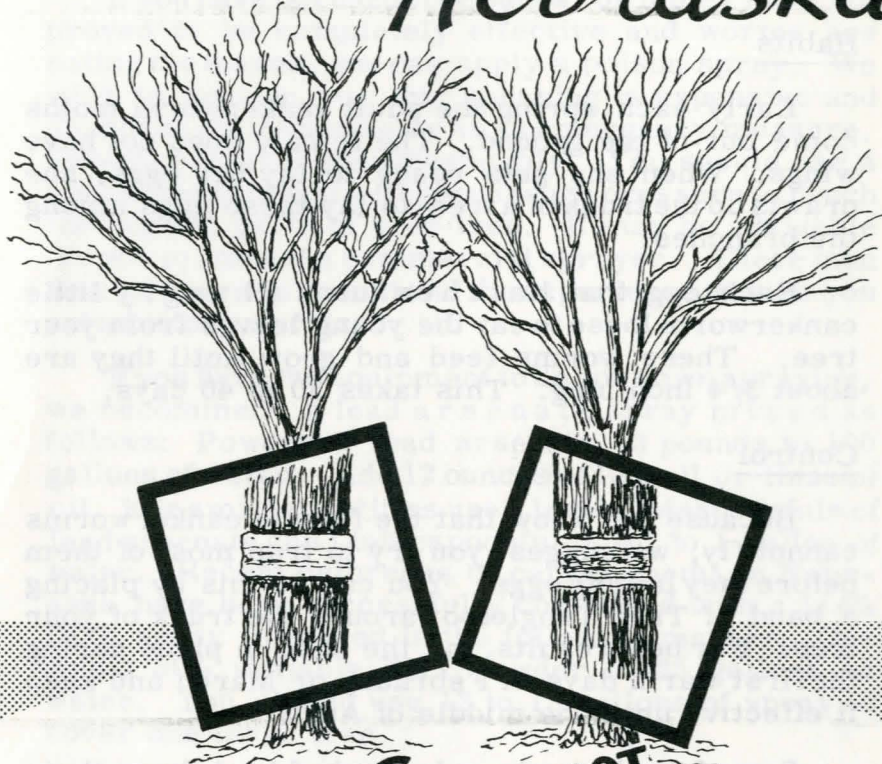
Jan. 1951

E.C. 1559

Department of Entomology
University of Nebraska
Lincoln, Nebr.

Spring

CANKERWORM CONTROL *in Nebraska*



THIS

**NOT
THIS**

EXTENSION SERVICE

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

COOPERATING

W. V. LAMBERT, DIRECTOR

SPRING CANKERWORM CONTROL IN NEBRASKA

Robert W. Helm
Extension Entomologist

Damage

Most of the spring cankerworm damage on your elm and hackberry trees is caused when the hungry caterpillars do their feeding in April. If you let these cankerworms eat as much as they want, they can strip an entire tree of its leaves.

Habits

Early each spring the adult cankerworm moths come out of the ground. The female does not have wings. When she gets ready to lay her eggs, she crawls up the trunk of a tree to lay these eggs among the branches.

Each egg that hatches turns a hungry little cankerworm loose to eat the young leaves from your tree. These worms feed and grow until they are about $3/4$ inch long. This takes 30 to 40 days.

Control

Because we know that the female cankerworms cannot fly, we suggest you try to trap most of them before they lay any eggs. You can do this by placing a band of Tree Tanglefoot around the trunk of your tree. For best results, put the band in place during the first warm days in February or March and keep it effective until the middle of April.

Some folks have shaved a band of bark from their tree and then applied the Tree Tanglefoot directly. This is effective, but it is a cold, difficult task in the early spring, and it will leave a scar on your tree for many years. If you wish to avoid this disfiguration, plus most of the cold, outdoor work, you can make a safe and satisfactory band, indoors, from cheap cotton batting and single-ply tarred building paper. Cut the cotton into strips about two

inches wide and wrap it around the trunk of your tree. Over the cotton, place a five-inch wide strip of the tar paper. Draw the paper tight and tack it securely where it overlaps. Now you can spread the Tree Tanglefoot on the tar paper, in a two or three-inch-wide band. You must take care to plug all the crevices under the paper band with cotton. This forces the females to crawl into the sticky Tree Tanglefoot. When the cankerworm females become numerous you will have to check this band very often to keep it sticky and clean.

If you have not used tree bands, or if they have not proved to be completely effective and worms are eating the leaves, you can apply a poison spray. We wish to caution you that spraying is expensive and should be relied upon only as an emergency measure. Spraying must be done thoroughly. You should use a spray machine that will give enough pressure to reach the highest parts of your tree. It may be advisable for you to contact a commercial sprayer. These men have proper equipment and the experience to give you satisfactory service.

If you have the equipment to do your own spraying, we recommend a lead arsenate spray mixed as follows: Powdered lead arsenate, 3 pounds to 100 gallons of water. Add 12 ounces of fish oil or linseed oil. For small quantities use 3 level tablespoonfuls of lead arsenate and 1 tablespoonful of oil to 1 gallon of water. Recent outbreaks of cankerworms in Nebraska have been successfully controlled with a 1/4% DDT spray prepared in the following manner: One pound 50% wettable DDT powder in 25 gallons of water. You should use 12 to 15 gallons of spray to cover one large tree.

NOTE: Another cankerworm, known as the fall cankerworm, has been found in some neighboring states but not in Nebraska. Its moth appears and lays eggs in the fall. In those areas trees are banded in the fall as well as in the spring. As we do not have this fall cankerworm in Nebraska, it is a complete waste of time and money to band your trees during the summer and fall.